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Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Comm. Amdt. \_\_\_\_\_

**AMENDMENT NO.** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Signature of Sponsor**

**AMEND Senate Bill No. SJR 127 House Bill No. \_\_\_\_\_**

Amend Senate Joint Resolution 127 by deleting it in its entirety and substituting the following language:

A RESOLUTION to congratulate Coach Larry Finch and the University of Memphis men's basketball team on winning the Great Midwest Conference Championship and for their success in the NCAA tournament.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pride in the accomplishments of Tennessee's athletes and sports teams who, through hard work and commitment to excellence, have risen to athletic prominence; and

WHEREAS, the University of Memphis men's basketball team is one such team, having reached the Sweet 16 round in this year's NCAA men's college basketball tournament; and

WHEREAS, Coach Finch should be commended for once again leading the Tigers into the upper echelon of NCAA teams and in the process becoming the winningest coach in Memphis basketball history, in addition to being named Coach of the Year by his peers in the Great Midwest Conference, and bringing the University its sixth trip to the NCAA tournament in his nine years as head coach; and

WHEREAS, propelled into the tournament by a convincing 22-9 regular season record, this team of talented athletes overcame injuries and adversity in pounding out win after win en route to capturing the Great Midwest Conference Championship; and

WHEREAS, the Tigers starting lineup displayed a variety of talent from a team of players who accumulated a wealth of individual and team honors and awards beginning

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at the very start of the regular season and continuously distinguishing themselves, and whose unselfish style produced nine separate leading scorers as the season progressed; and

WHEREAS, it is a tribute to the University of Memphis and a great pleasure to enjoy the talents of players such as David Vaughn, Lorenzen Wright, Chris Garner, Michael Wilson, Mingo Johnson, and Cedric Henderson, and their contributions to the Tigers' season; and

WHEREAS, David Vaughn, grandson to the Reverend David Vaughn, Sr., provided solid leadership and presence on the court, paced Memphis with almost 13 points and 10 rebounds per game, and numerous key plays such as the game winning putback against Purdue in the second round of the NCAA tournament; and

WHEREAS, Lorenzen Wright exploded into the Tiger lineup from the start by being named to the all-tournament NIT team, and going on to finish the season averaging almost 15 points and 10 rebounds per game with 15 double- doubles to his credit and with an especially memorable game of 27 points and 20 rebounds against Southern Mississippi, Ren gained the distinction of being the first Tiger player in 17 years to record a 20-20 game, all of which led to the Great Midwest Conference naming him Newcomer of the Year and First Team All Conference, in addition to his vying for national Freshman of the Year honors; and

WHEREAS, Chris Garner has become extremely adept at directing the team's attack both offensively and defensively, competing for the Conference lead in both steals

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and assists, and ending the season averaging almost 3 steals and 7 assists per game, and playing a key role in several Tiger victories such as Temple when Chris nailed a short jumper in the closing seconds to snatch away an impressive victory on the road, and proving himself equal to other more nationally touted players such as Georgetown's Allen Iverson, against whom Coach Finch's "little guy" outplayed thoroughly, scoring 20 points in the process and adding 9 rebounds, 6 assists, and 3 steals; and

WHEREAS, Michael Wilson was a welcome addition to the team, providing steady play as was evidenced by his double figure scoring average in eight of the last nine games, including a high of 33 points which propelled Memphis to a win over Cincinnati, and who reminded Tiger fans with his spectacular leaping ability that there is another Michael associated with "air" who does not reside in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Mingo Johnson also was included in the influx of new faces to the team, adding versatility as a passer and a dead-eye shooter, Mingo averaged 40 percent from 3-point range and barely falling short of a season record of treys made, he provided an outside threat no team could ignore, as Arkansas discovered in the NCAA tournament when Mingo introduced himself to the nation by scoring a career high 32 points; and

WHEREAS, Cedric Henderson was a valuable asset to the Tigers as his consistent play on offense provided Memphis with an average of 13 points per game, which included a season high 31 points against Houston, and whose tenacious defense helped to shut down opposing teams' star players, as his block of Purdue's Cuonzo

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Martin's 3-point attempt was one of the key plays during the second round of the NCAA tournament to contribute to a Tiger win; and

WHEREAS, several other players accumulated a considerable amount of playing time: Justin Wimmer who inspired the team with his unending hustle and willingness to try to draw the charge, and who enjoyed strong showings of 25 points against Dayton, and a 14 point effort against Arkansas in the regular season; Leon Mitchell proved why he led the team in 3-point percentage with a barrage from Le-Le of five treys in seven minutes against an unsuspecting Long Beach State team; and Rodney Newsom who almost single-handedly brought the Tigers back into a regular season contest with 5 three-point goals in a period of three and a half minutes against Cincinnati and on to eventual victory; and

WHEREAS, minutes on the floor will never reflect the truth of long hours and days of preparation, sacrifice, and dedication of those who love to play the game, Marcus Nolan, Jason Fox, Jason Smith, and Rob Forrest are a credit to the University for the manner in which they provide the team with their enthusiasm and commitment to the cause of Tiger basketball; and

WHEREAS, Coach Finch and the team are fortunate to have an excellent supporting cast of assistant coaches whose work behind the scenes has translated into success on the court; and

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WHEREAS, Tom Schuberth has proven himself an excellent judge of talent as is evidenced by his recent enthusiastic recommendation of junior college student Mingo Johnson; and

WHEREAS, these coaches also proved their worth during the regular season when circumstances provided an opportunity to oversee the team in a come from behind victory over St. Louis which demonstrated the coaching ability of assistant Coach John Prince, as well as Coach Tim Morgan and Schuberth; and

WHEREAS, Coach Larry Finch and company built on the momentum gained from the regular season in once again making a splash in the NCAA tournament by advancing to the Sweet 16; and

WHEREAS, in first round action, the Tigers defeated longtime nemesis Louisville, thereby providing an unofficial and exciting start to the new conference involving both schools; and

WHEREAS, in the next round against a talented Purdue team, Memphis put a lid on Coach Gene Keady's Boilermakers with David Vaughn's last second heroics; and

WHEREAS, the Tigers played defending national champion Arkansas in the third round, trading shot for shot with the Hogs and almost coming away with a victory in an overtime battle that served notice to the country that the Tigers are and will be a basketball force to be reckoned with; and

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WHEREAS, this General Assembly would like to express its appreciation to the coaches and players of the team, and wishes the departing players luck in their endeavors on and off the court; and

WHEREAS, for those players who remain and for those incoming players, this General Assembly wishes success both on the court and in the classroom, and is eagerly anticipating watching the Tigers play next year in the Meadowlands; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to express its gratitude to the Memphis Tigers for the tremendous honor and recognition they have brought to Memphis and the state of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we congratulate Coach Larry Finch and the University of Memphis men's basketball team on winning the Midwest Conference Championship, and extend to them our deepest congratulations for their successful and inspiring advancement in the NCAA tournament.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to Coach Finch, team members and the school, with this final clause omitted from such copy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be spread on the Senate Journal.

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